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RUEHCD/AMCONSUL CIUDAD JUAREZ 0218
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LAGOS 000222

SIPDIS

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STATE FOR AF/W
STATE FOR INR/AA
DOE FOR CAROLYN GAY
WARSAW FOR LISA PIASCIK
CIUDAD JUAREZ FOR DONNA BLAIR
ISTANBUL FOR TASHAWNA SMITH
SAO PAULO FOR ANDREW WITHERSPOON

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [NI](#)
SUBJECT: ENUGU STATE: AN EMERGING MODEL FOR PDP DOMINANCE

REF: 06 LAGOS 1403

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Classified By: Consul General Brian L. Browne for reasons 1.4 (B and D)

¶1. (C) Summary: A March 5 visit by Poloffs to Enugu State showed the People's Democratic Party (PDP) dominating the political scene and building towards the future. Controlling the PDP primary, Governor Chimaroke Nnamani chose protege Sullivan Chime as his successor. Opposition parties are weak and appear unable to seriously threaten the PDP. There are grumblings from observers and the opposition that Governor Nnamani took generous helpings from the till during his term, and he could run into trouble with the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC). End summary.

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Ebeano in Control, Senate President Nnamani Out
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¶2. (U) Both Governor Nnamani, running for the Senate, and People's Democratic Party (PDP) gubernatorial candidate Sullivan Chime have billboards and posters of equal size next to each other along Enugu highways, as if to remind voters of the prominence of Governor Nnamani and Chime's closeness to the Governor.

¶3. (C) OsitaOgbu, Executive Director of the Centre for the Advancement of Democracy and Rule of Law, visibly despaired when assessing politics in Enugu. Governor Chimaroke Nnamani's Ebeano faction is in control of the Enugu PDP, Ogbu observed. Nnamani's faction Ebeano, loosely translated from the Igbo meaning "where we are", has employed five people per ward to make sure the elections will turn out in their favor, Ogbu said.

¶4. (C) Ogbu said Senate President Ken Nnamani complained to Obasanjo about the corrupt and closed nature of the Enugu PDP, but the President ignored him. While angered, Senate President Nnamani, rumored as an opposition Vice-Presidential candidate, did not leave the PDP because he is scared, Ogbu

commented. Showing the level of acrimony, Senator Nnamani's personal vehicle was wrecked by Ebeano partisans during a recent PDP retreat in Enugu.

15. (C) Sullivan Chime, Governor Nnamani's handpicked successor, was the former Enugu State Attorney General, and like other PDP gubernatorial candidates not the obvious front runner before his selection. Nathan Nwakamma, editorial correspondent for the News Agency of Nigeria, told Poloff that people consider Chime a political novice. Nevertheless, Chime is the current favorite to win the gubernatorial prize.

Governor Nnamani Avoids the EFCC, for Now

16. (C) Ogbu, a consultant in the Southeast for Transparency International, gave Poloff two books detailing the corrupt practices of Governor Nnamani. The two books were authored by C.C. Onoh, former Governor of Anambra State and a member of Ohaneze Ndigbo, a pan-Igbo group. When he first ran for Governor in 1999, Nnamani had to borrow money to fly back to the U.S., Ogbu said. Since then, the Governor had enriched himself and built a vast business empire during his eight years in power.

17. (C) Ogbu said Governor Nnamani made a misstep when he briefly campaigned for the presidency, not realizing Obasanjo was still considering a third term. Obasanjo brought the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) to bear on Governor Nnamani and halted the campaign in its tracks. Since Governor Nnamani ended his campaign, Obasanjo has protected him, Ogbu said, by ordering EFCC lists to be doctored and the Governor's name to be removed. Although the EFCC arrested Enugu State Speaker Abel Chukwu, the move did not have Obasanjo's support and would fail, Ogbu commented.

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In March, the PDP quietly replaced its Deputy Governor candidate, Local Government Commissioner Sam Ejiofor, who is under prosecution on charges of embezzling 5 billion naira (approximately 39 million USD) in state money.

18. (C) Nwakamma told Poloff Governor Nnamani was not popular and had made more enemies than friends in Enugu. According to Nwakamma, Governor Nnamani is trying to become a Senator so as to defend himself against a possible move by the EFCC. Nevertheless, Nwakamma predicted the EFCC would go after the Governor as soon as he lost his immunity. Fred Chukwueolobe of the Action Congress (AC), perhaps expressing wishful thinking more than reality, said Senator Nnamani had made a deal with Obasanjo to jail Governor Nnamani once the Governor left office.

Opposition Splintered and Weak

19. (C) The opposition, after brief discussion of uniting behind one candidate, appears splintered and weak. According to Ogbu, the AC, the All Nigerian People's Party (ANPP), and the Labor Party (LP) are the three main opposition parties. These parties could not agree on one candidate so the unity concept fell apart. The bulk of the opposition supports the AC and its candidate Dubem Onyia. LP candidate Okey Ezea has a weak party structure, and his running mate for Deputy Governor is a former 419 con artist. Fidel Ayoga of the ANPP has some popular support but no money, Ogbu lamented.

110. (C) Ogbu told Poloff that the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA), which briefly claimed victory in Enugu in 2003, has been riddled by dissension and crippled by the poor health of its leader, presidential candidate Dim Chukwuemeka Ojukwu. APGA has had problems getting recognized in the State. For example, Enugu Vanguard correspondent Tony Edike did not know who the APGA candidate was.

¶11. (C) Poloff met with Okechukwu Nkoloagu, Chairman of the Enugu State All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA). Nkoloagu gave a handout describing APGA's gubernatorial candidate, businessman Eloka Ifeanyi. Nkoloagu said APGA won in 2003 but was robbed of its mandate by PDP rigging. APGA's candidate in 2003, Ugochukwu Agballa, left the party in a dispute. Nkoloagu denied the claim that Ojukwu was ill, claiming that he was in excellent health. Nkoloagu predicted an APGA victory and said the party would go to court if there were problems.

Comment

¶12. (C) Enugu is a PDP-dominated state. The State features a governor seeking to protect himself from EFCC prosecution, a political machine of enforcers, a liberal dose of largesse to smooth the process, and a weak opposition. Governor Nnamani's Ebeano faction appears ready to carry Chime to victory in April. Its only real worries are the EFCC and the courts. Governor Nnamani chose Chime and is running for Senator Nnamani's seat, but most importantly the Governor will look to the next President for protection. The opposition appears weak and disorganized, and the populace is convinced the PDP will win, either fairly or by manipulating the results in its favor. End comment.

BROWNE